

Educator Involvement in Decision Making

By

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Declaration of originality

I declare that this mini- dissertation is my own work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

M.J. Ngidi

Durban, December 1999

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Abstract

The South African School Act No. 84 of 1996, the White Paper on Education and Training of 1995 and many other policy documents on Education and Training in and after 1994, proposed greater involvement of major stakeholders, in particular, the educators, in the process of decision-making in educational institutions. This opened a chapter of a major transformational shift from the apartheid and bureaucratic governance to integration and democratic system of education.

In this study, a small sample of educators in the Upper South Coast area of Durban South Region in Umbumbulu district has been chosen to investigate their responses to the issue of educator involvement in decision-making in schools. The questionnaire was used as the research instrument for this study.

The major findings that emerged from the survey were as follows:

The educators in the Upper South Coast area of Durban South Region regard the decisions made about the management of the school as directly affecting them. They believe that they have a major role to play in the management of the school and should therefore be not limited to the classroom. They support the participation in the planning, development and general management of the school but believe that they are not being trained by the Department to meet the challenges of a new democratic system. In particular, they (educators) believe that they lack skills in managing the school because they were not adequately prepared during their teacher training and no relevant in-service programs are currently organised for such developments.

As recommendations to the above major findings, educator development holistic approach should be adopted to provide educators with basic managerial skills. The Department, Universities and Colleges must work jointly in organising short-term accredited courses for educators.

The Department of Education must involve educators in the planning of in-service programs for educators. In order to create a favorable climate for educator development, it must be integrated with whole school development through, for example, school focussed in-service training.

Chapter One

Educator involvement in decision-making

Orientation to the problem

1.1 Introduction

The South African education system has undergone and is still undergoing an unparalleled transformation. The post 1994 period, has seen the introduction of a series of policy documents. Some of these are the white paper on Education and Training (15 March 1995), South African Schools Act no.84 of 1996. Many other guideline documents prepare schools for educational reform and transformation.

The success of transformation is however, not related to the proliferation of policy documents. It is the role and involvement of educators in their implementation that is of paramount importance. It is for this reason, inter alia, that this research investigates the educator involvement in decision-making process in the senior secondary schools of the upper South Coast region of Durban in the KwaZulu -Natal education department.

MacLagan and Nel (1995:ix) highlighting the significance of stakeholder participation or involvement have this to say: "A generation of experience in the workplace consistently demonstrates that, on the average, participative management strategies improve organizational performance".

1.2 Definition of concepts

Educator: The concept educator refers to a person whose profession, whose talent is the ability to impart knowledge, practical skill or understanding. The term educator is synonymously used with the concept teacher which, according to Mosoge and

van der Westhuizen (1997:196) includes any person who teaches, educates or trains learners at a school. It excludes a principal or headmaster of a school.

In this study, the term educator will refer specifically to the educator as defined in the Employment of Educator's Act no.76 of 1998: "any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, at any public school, further education and training institution, department office or adult basic education centre and who is appointed in a post on any educator establishment under this act;"

Participative management: Maclagan and Nel (1995) use the concept participative management synonymously with employee involvement and in this research the concept will be used to mean educator or teacher involvement in the managerial decision making processes in his or her school. A particular focus will be on the duties and responsibilities of educators (school and office based) as per Educator Labour Relations Council Resolution No. 8 of 1998, tracing whether the co-duties and responsibilities of the educator promote participative management.

"Management in education should be able to draw on the professional competencies of educators, build a sense of unity of purpose and reinforce their belief that they can make a difference. When and where appropriate, authorities need to allocate authority and responsibility which will ensure the building of human resource capacity" (ELRC, Resolution No. 8 of 1998: 4).

Keith and Girling (1991: 27) state that "participatory management refers to regular and significant employee involvement in organizational decision-making ...' decisions that affect the entire organization as well as their individual jobs, establishing and enforcing performance standards". Participative management relates to democratisation, school based management and educator empowerment.

Decision-making: is “an action of taking decisions through which an organization is regulated, governed and managed” (Mosoge, van der Westhuizen. P C 1997: 196). According to Arnold and Feldman (1996: 396) decision making is (or should be) a process whereby decision makers seek out and choose the course of action that is most likely to maximize the attainment of their goals and objectives. Musaazi (1982: 75) considers the process of decision making as a cycle of events that includes the identification and diagnosis of a difficulty, the reflective development of a plan to alleviate the difficulty, the initiation of the plan and the evaluation of its success. In this study, decision making will be defined in terms of any of the three above quoted authors.

1.3 Motivation for undertaking the study

In any country that has undergone change politically, there is a need for addressing its educational developments more especially its decision making processes. The main actors in such developments who may not be overlooked are the educators because they are the integral part of the school management structure. Steyn (1998: 131) states that effective schooling can only take place when both principals and teachers are involved in decision making. This author further argues that teachers should be empowered to participate in the process of knowledge production and distribution and not just passive consumption. The decisions should be made by teachers who are in touch with the work. The management of resources, pupils and the environment is also part of the responsibility of the teachers.

There is also a need of addressing the extent to which educators are involved in the decision-making processes in their respective schools. The limited South African literature uses a plethora of concepts to define educator involvement to decision-making in schools, for example, site based management, school based management, shared decision making.

In his study of 72 teachers from rural and urban african schools, Hlophe (1992) found that 38 teachers said that shared decision-making is not used. Of seventy two teachers 20 said it was minimally used and 13 were undecided. He then concluded that despite the fact that teachers were ready and prepared for deliberative and participative decision-making, it was not being used in schools. According to Mosoge and van der Westhuizen (1997:197), very few researches related to teacher access to decision making in schools, focused on developing countries which had little democratic participation of the population. Research by Harber (1993) in Tanzania emphasized pupil rather than teacher participation. Mosoge and van der Westhuizen (1997) further argue that in the Republic of South Africa, most research in this direction has concentrated on team management and the approach to participation is from the operational viewpoint of the principal rather than from teachers.

Hence, lack of research in the area of educator participation became a source of inspiration and motivation for the researcher to undertake the study.

1.4 Statement of the problem

“In the light of the trend towards decentralized school management in South Africa, research indicates that teachers need to be empowered to participate fully in decision making” (Steyn 1998:131). The concept of educator - empowerment on effective decision-making needs to be closely studied in terms of its effect on educator participation in decision making process in schools. Teacher in this regard is defined by Steyn and Squelch (1997:2) as the fundamental transfer of authority that includes, inter alia the process by which teachers are allowed (or assured) to make decisions regarding assigned tasks; teacher’s involvement in the creation of ways to maintain a productive and satisfying work environment and their involvement in daily problem solving and decision making.

Related research on participation in organisational decision making dating back from the works of Alutto and Belasco (1972), show one major finding that teachers report participation deprivation in all managerial activities. Hence it is the researcher's view in this study that the lack of educator involvement in managerial decision-making in schools might contribute to low morale and job - dissatisfaction. It appears to affect the selfworth of educators as well as their contribution effort. Consequently, the academic achievement of learners is affected.

The central challenge in a democratic education system of South Africa, is to allow or assure a greater involvement of educators in managing schools. This, according to Steyn and Squelch (1997:1) is a powerful means to improve schools and an essential ingredient if schools strive for excellence. The participation of teachers in managerial decision making activities is therefore of paramount importance.

To determine to what extent the educators should, or must be involved to ensure their satisfaction as well as the achievement of the schools' goals, an empirical study which is evaluative, will be conducted at selected schools in the Upper South Coast region of Durban in KwaZulu -Natal.

1.5 Research Questions

This study sets out to answer the following questions:

- * Which areas of decision-making processes are the senior secondary school teachers involved in?
- * What are the key considerations in the formation of decision-making teams?
- * What are the issues related to the involvement or lack of involvement of educators in decision making?

1.6 Hypothesis

This research project will be based on the hypotheses that:

- * the teachers in Secondary schools are not involved in the managerial decision-making activities.
- * the lack of educator involvement in decision making processes in schools gives rise to low-moral and job dissatisfaction.

1.7 Aims of the study

This study is conducted with the following aims in mind:

- * To determine the types of decisions in which the teachers in senior secondary schools are involved in.
- * To establish whether teachers are involved in change related decisions in schools.
- * To investigate if the decisions in which the teachers could be involved in may foster participative school leadership.

1.8 Methods of research for the study

The researcher will use the descriptive method. The questionnaires and interviewers will be used as research instruments to obtain data from teachers and principals of selected senior secondary schools.

1.9 The layout o the study

The subsequent chapters of this study will cover the following subject matter:

Chapter 2 will deal with the review of literature on teacher participation or teacher involvement in decision-making in general.

Chapter 3 will concentrate on the methodology of the research work.

Chapter 4 will concentrate on the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the research instruments mentioned in chapter 3.

Chapter 5 will present the conclusions and recommendations based on the findings obtained from chapter 4.

1.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, the orientation to the problem under investigation has been provided. The key concepts have been defined and the problem under investigation clearly stated. The next chapter will then focus on the review of literature on decision making and teacher participation in schools.

Chapter Two

Educator participation in decision-making: a review of literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on participatory decision-making as it affects the educators in their educational institutions. The chapter is aimed at providing a conceptual background within which participative decision-making can be studied.

2.2 An exposition of the type and nature of decisions

The dawn of a “new South Africa” as Mosoge and van der Westhuizen (1997:196) put it, has seen a proliferation of legislation specifying the participation of stakeholders in school governance and management. As pointed out in chapter 1, many policy documents are examples of such legislation eg: The South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996, Employment of Educators Act no.76 of 1998, Education Labour Relations Council Resolution no.8 of 1998 and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108, 1996. The daunting task of converting this new legislation into practical reality remains with the principals, educators, parents and learners.

The introduction of legislation which is framework for democratic governance and management was made against a background of authoritarian modes of management in schools. The fundamental thrust of the above pieces of legislation is the role which stakeholders who are involved in education have, in the transformation of education yet. Principals and school governors may not have the experience⁴ and theoretical grounding in the tenets of participatory management.

The section below reviews literature on tenets of participative decision-making. The discussion is preceded by review of the nature and type of the decisions which the institutions make.

2.3 Tenets of participative decision-making

2.3.1 Sharing decision-making

Almost every person has some conceptions of what participatory decision-making is all about, but often people have different ideas. This is shown in the definition of concepts' section in chapter 1. One of the keys to the success of participative decision-making, as Bauer (1992) points out, is building consensus.

Research regarding effective school has consistently identified decision-making as the area of administrative and educator concern. When, to what extent, and in which issues should educators be involved, are the questions which principals need to answer when evaluating their decision-making processes. Katz (1991) argues that shared decision-making is of primary importance to a holistic approach to school improvement. Through shared decisions he believes, there will be a better practice of integration leading to progress of the reform embarked upon. Shared decision-making is seen as a solution for all school related problems. It is a process that has been found to require time to filter through an organisation before any tangible evidence can be observed. The works of Lindelow and Heynderickx (1989) support such observations, where such authors cite the actual reports of districts where school based management through shared decision-making could be seen over years after implementation and in school improvement.

In a small scale study of Exploring the perceptions of teacher empowerment in South Africa, Steyn and Squelch (1997:3 - 4), in their findings, cite a number of

teachers' opinions pertaining to shared decision making. Some of the opinions as cited by the above authors read as follows:

- all people should have a say rather than adhering to autocratic decision of the principal alone.
- teachers can play a larger role in management
- a lot of time educators feel their hands are tied - they often feel they do not have enough say - that they are not recognised.
- educators are frustrated when top management do not listen to them.

The literature on participative decision-making has advanced the importance of involving those people directly affected by the decisions. The above opinions about management express the sentiments of educators regarding participation in decisions.

2.3.2 Educator empowerment and principal leadership

Garrison (1988:501) argues that individual teachers should be empowered to participate in the process of knowledge production and distribution. This author favours teacher empowerment and argues that although the government legislation and regulations may endorse greater decentralization of decision-making, this does not mean that teachers will become more empowered than previously. The power remains with the principals who are able to determine the degree of teacher participation.

Steyn (1988:131) argues that shared decision-making emphasizes a fresh conception of the principal's role in school management and a different kind of relationship with teachers. In his writings about the principals' role in building democracy in the Australian school setting, Dimmock (1995:172) states that the principals of democratic schools are themselves democrats. These principals involve all stakeholders where possible, in governance and management of their schools.

They motivate educators, parents and learners in the maintenance of culture of teaching and learning and also ensure the commitment of diverse groups and individuals to central core values. These democratic principals delegate leadership in democratic schools. They aim to empower others to lead and thus share power.

In his concluding remarks, Dimmock (1995:173) argues that principals are the key participants in building democracy in schools. He further argues that through direct personal actions and through indirect empowerment of others, the principals can encourage or prevent democratic values and practices in administrative decision-making.

Herman and Herman's (1993:263) definition of educator empowerment shows clearly the role played by principals in educator empowerment as well as the implication of educator empowerment for managerial decision-making and leadership in schools. Herman et al (1993) regards educator "empowerment as the fundamental transfer of authority that includes the following: the process by which teachers are allowed to make decisions regarding assigned tasks; teachers' involvement in creation of ways to maintain a productive and satisfying work environment and their involvement in daily problem-solving and decision-making." Educator empowerment, therefore refers to giving traditional and non-traditional authority to people of groups who in the past did not have the authority to make decisions.

From the above literature, it appears that leadership is of cardinal importance to enable empowerment. Thus it is seen that there is a close correlation between the quality and degree of leadership on one hand and the standard of empowerment on the other.

A very important aspect as outlined by Carl (1995:12) is that empowerment of educators does not imply disempowering principals. It implies rather that, there should be an encouragement for decision-making. As such, empowerment requires a participating leadership style which creates opportunities for encouragement and joint decision-making. In support of his argument, Bernd (1992:64) has this to say: "Teacher empowerment loses its effectiveness if the teachers do not have an instructional leader to keep them on track, well informed and involved."

Cunard (1990:33) says that "the principal who shares power with the teachers is still a leader. Cunard believes that this principal is a more effective instructional leader because empowered teachers are more likely to maximize their potential.

Huddlestone, Claspell and Killion (1991:80 - 88) in support of educator empowerment for decision-making, set out a motivation and a procedure to promote teacher participation in decision-making. They cite the following reasons:

(i)for a preparedness phase:

- (a) belief in the principle of participating in decision-making
- (b)making an evaluation of the staff as to how receptive they will be for it
- (c)being patient and realistic
- (d)beginning on a small scale
- (e)building a basis for knowledge in order to be able to take informed decisions
- (f)developing the expertise of personnel
- (g)developing good communication channels
- (h)showing confidence and support

(ii)The next stage includes experimentation, refinement, rounding off and institutionalisation. It is characterized by the educational leaders' ability to maintain good human relations, show enough confidence in their teachers, giving them freedom to plan professional programs for themselves and to make independent decisions.

The implementation behind the above stages enables principals to democratise the schools. The White Paper on Education and Training (1995:25) states clearly that it is “the main theme of the Reconstruction and Development Program to empower people, through education and training, to participate effectively in all processes of democratic society”. This is in support of the trend towards decentralization of school management in South Africa. The basic need for the success of decentralisation is to empower the educators to participate fully in the decision- making processes in schools.

2.3.3 Inclusive school decision-making structures

Democratising schools, as Steyn (1998:135) put it, implies that school structures need to change to allow for greater participation. Such structures need to be designed in such a manner as to promote educator empowerment. For many years the mechanism for educator participation in school management has been through staff-meeting and school committees. This involved mostly senior educators in curricular activities and management decision making. The educators are usually constrained by agenda items selected by the principal and they (the educators) are relegated to fill in the details.

The change in school structures imply, inter alia, diminishing hierarchical differences in school organisations, giving educators professional autonomy and collegial involvement in decisions. Current policies designed to restructure South African school systems appear to increase the opportunities for the expression of democracy at school level. One example being the Implementation of the Year Mark system as contained in Preparation 1999 - Guideline Document Number 1.

It is clearly evident from these documents that the new education system in South Africa is directed not only towards the development of mental skills, among

learners. It includes the development of values, attitudes and a notion of applied competency among educators through involvement in all levels of school structures. The formulation of governing bodies who are so integrative (i.e. involving parents, learners and teachers) is another example.

Further implications of educator empowerment for the democratisation of schools emphasized by Steyn (ibid) include:

- provision of opportunities for co-operative actions
- *in-service training of educators*
- adaptation of their leadership style

Although the educators' need for empowerment is crucial in a democratic school setting, there is also a need to be specific in terms of the decision-making authority an empowered profession would have and as Erlandson and Bifano (1987:34) argue, it is not safe to assume that teachers should have exclusive control over all areas of decision-making in schools.

Research on decision-making, suggests that participation in decision-making by organizational members may be differentially appropriate, depending on the organizational subsystem presenting the decisional situation. Mohrman, Cooke and Mohrman (1978:15) in their study of participation in decision-making, argue that *appropriate patterns of participation and influence vary among schools and are contingent on a number of factors such as the technology being used in schools.* Mohrman et al (1978:15) go on saying that differences in organizational contexts create situations on which many important aspects of the process and structure are contingent. This suggests a relationship between the contingency approach to leadership and decision-making.

2.3.4 Situational consideration and participative decision-making

In support of the contingency approach to decision-making in schools, Hoy and Tartar (1993:4) say that *the teachers participation in decision-making can enhance the quality of decisions and promote co-operation if the correct strategy is linked to the appropriate situation.* Hence the concept of contingency or “fit” as Mohrman, Cooke and Mohrman (ibid) argue, seems useful for developing models for participation and, in particular, models that consider content domains of decisional participation. The three authors, in their study focused on routine versus non-routine types of decisions that should be made specifically to achieve organizational effectiveness.

To the question: “should staff be involved in decision-making?”the researcher refers to Steyn (1998:134). A direct answer to this question as cited by Steyn is: “It depends.” Steyn is thus in support of the contingency approach to decision-making.

Hoy and Tartar (ibid) developed two rules (i.e. the relevance rule and the expertise rule) in an attempt to answer the question of how a principal would know where a decision falls. The two rules are described as follows:

“The personal relevance rule”: Do staff have a personal interest in the outcome of the decision?

“The expertise rule”: Do staff have expertise to contribute to the decision?

Steyn (ibid) associate these rules to a Situational Theory of Hersey and Blanchard (1977) that acknowledges that leadership styles must be matched with the maturity level of followers.

According to Zuelke and Willerman (1987:30) maturity of followers is defined in terms of three components, namely:

- 1. the capacity to set high but attainable goals,
- 2. the willingness and ability to act responsibly,
- 3. experience.

The interaction or relationship between the two rules result in definition of four situations. These represent what Hoy and Tarter (ibid) refer to as the zones of acceptance. The following table or figure was cited in Hoy and Tartar (1993:6):

FIGURE: ZONE OF ACCEPTANCE

		DO SUBORDINATES HAVE PERSONAL RELEVANCE?	
		YES	NO
CAN SUBORDINATES CONTRIBUTE EXPERTISE?	YES	1. Outside zone of acceptance (Definitely include)	3. Marginal with expertise (occasionally include)
	NO	2. Marginal with relevance (Occasionally include)	4. Inside zone (Definitely include)

The numbers 1 to 4 in the table were inserted by the writer for discussion purposes.

Situation 1: The staff-members (educators) have knowledge and skills to contribute to the decision. Such educators have a strong personal interest in the outcome of the decision. Hence the decision is regarded as being outside the zone of acceptance. The staff-members must therefore be involved in the decision-making process.

Situation 2: The educators have no expertise but strong personal interest in the outcome of the decisions. Involvement of such staff members should therefore be limited or occasional.

Situation 3: Staff-members have expertise but no personal interest to contribute to the decisions. Such educators must also be occasionally involved in the decision making process.

Situation 4: Educators in this category do not have knowledge and skills and neither do they show personal interest in the decision making process. Such educators according to Hoy and Tartar should therefore be excluded or not involved at all.

The above discussion suggests that training of educators to enhance their expertise in decision-making, is an important factor but must be contingent to the situation and factors relating to educators. People participating in decision-making cannot be expected to perform their duties satisfactorily if they are not properly prepared and well trained to do so. "Teacher training programmes must provide teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to work collaboratively and assume leadership roles" (Steyn 1998:135).

In conclusion to this section, reference is made to Rubin's view on teacher participation. Rubin (1987) sees teacher participation as a form of development. He states that it becomes personally satisfying to educators and contributes to the professionalisation of teaching.

2.4 Other mechanisms providing opportunities for participative decision-making

In addition to opportunities traditionally used to promote staff participation in decision making, the following methods are recommended:

2.4.1 Staff meetings

Bezzina (1993) suggests that staff meetings can be opportunities for staff participation in decision-making. He further points out that “The principals could provide opportunities to staff in staff meetings to develop skills in communication, problem analysis, conflict management and brainstorming. Developing these skills among staff members is important if staff members are to experience their meaningful contribution to decision-making.

Greenfield (1995:65) points out the need to break down isolation accompanying teaching. Reep & Grier (1992:92) on the other hand; consider peer interaction as a crucial element in empowering teachers for effective decision making. Reep & Grier (1992) further argue that opportunities should be provided for educators to share ideas, resources or strategies with which they are experimenting.

2.4.2 Delegated responsibilities

Research suggests that “principals involve teachers in the corporate life of the school and encourage them to work collegially for the benefit of the school, higher performance of both teachers and learners is achieved” (Dimmock, 1995:165). From the range of school improvement strategies available to principals, two are selected here from Dimmock (1995) for their efficacy in promoting democratic structures, procedures and processes, hence participative decision-making.

They are:

- shared values and beliefs;
- educator collegiality and development,

The two strategies are dependent on the principals leadership, as well as on culture and climate established in the school and across the school community. A sense of shared values and beliefs are developed through creating a vision or set of goals and priorities for the school. The principal plays a major role in the encouragement of educators, involvement in, commitment to and responsibility for the school vision through an incorporative approach and delegation of responsibilities.

To ensure a success in the delegation of responsibilities as a mechanism for participative decision-making, principals, according to Dimmock (1995) are expected to be leaders and managers. In support of this view, Chapman (1993) goes on to say that the exercise of both management and leadership is essential in building the incorporative culture essential to secure democratic schools. Fullan (1995) and Goodlad (1984) suggest that successful change and successful decision-making in schools are more likely where the responsibility for school and classroom improvement lies with those who work in the school, rather than being imposed by outsiders.

An effective principal, according to Steyn (1998) sees a school in terms of people. In support of the above statement Dimmock (1995:172) says that principals who express their belief in people by delegating responsibility and trust, are the kind of leaders who are willing to relinquish and share power with others and are therefore able to generate a community of leadership in which every member becomes a leader in some way, at some time.

Skilled principals have saved themselves much time and created a tremendous sense of ownership by practising delegation. Cherry (1991:38) argues that if

principals pay careful attention to teacher talents and interest when matching the teacher to the task, teachers are empowered.

The above subsection shows without doubt that delegation is another crucial mechanism to provide opportunities for participative decision-making.

2.5 Hindrances to effective decision-making

2.5.1 The organisation of the Management Structure

A highly centralised bureaucratic system of control in schools is understood to be the product of the legacy of apartheid in the country. The existing organisational structure in schools is still highly centralised with the principal at the top of the hierarchy and the educators at the bottom. Although the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1994 encourages all stakeholders participation in decision-making processes at all levels of the education department, in practice, it is restricted by the bureaucratic arrangement of the school structure which still exists.

Administrative decentralization of education by way of the creation of ethnically - based “own-affairs” departments of education in South Africa, as Maharaj (1991: 33) argues, has not meant a wider scope for flexibility and freedom in managerial matters pertaining to decision-making in this context. The educators in schools are faced with the same hierarchical arrangement and a rigid bureaucratic set up as that of the apartheid system.

The mind set of such educators cannot be expected to have changed as a result of the announcements, at the government level, of the country’s political shift to democracy. The practicality of the shift at the school level has not been implemented. Managerial practice to ensure educator participation in decision-making is therefore still restricted.

The researcher's encounter with some educators in his place of work has shown that most of them are more than prepared and willing to be involved in managerial decision-making processes. "But who am I to initiate that?" is one statement emanating from educators revealing a hindrance.

A number of constraints, as cited by Hlatshwayo (1997:16) can be said to relate to the issues of organisation of management structure in the system of education in schools. These constraints pertain to the lack of consultation, centralised control or prescriptive policies of the department, the management style of principals (i.e. principals not heeding suggestions of teachers), hostile relationship between teachers in non-promotion posts and the management staff at schools as well as the lack of opportunities for teachers to get involved.

Further blockages to effective decision-making in schools are cited by Cunningham (1982:170). He identifies four basic blockages to effective decision-making, namely:

- a) perceptual
- b) emotional
- c) cultural and
- d) environmental intellectual and expressive.

They are considered to be having a negative impact of the decision-making process. The worst impact according to Adams (1999:11) is that the above blockages create "mental walls that block the problem solver from correctly perceiving its solution."

2.5.1.1 Emotional, cultural and environmental blocks

The emotional blocks emanate inter alia, from the fear of making a mistake, failing and the inability to deal with pressure. This is very common especially, when educators keep silent in staff-meetings when they are expected to voice their opinions as a form of involvement in decision making. The fear of making mistakes prevents open communication of ideas to the other staff members and therefore has an impact on the decision-making.

Quietness in the staff meetings when the principal needs open communication, is a cultural block. The principal might interpret this lack of co-operation, trust and a support from his or her subordinates as an environmental block.

2.5 1.2 Intellectual and expressive block

This, according to Cunningham (1982) are the kind of conceptual blocks which are most common for educators. They are caused by a lack of intellectual or verbal ability. Cunningham argues that inadequate in-service training, lack of experience, inadequate teacher education does not equip teachers for continuous development. Teachers lack ability to follow alternative logic to interpret information, to convert imaginary thought to verbal expression and also lack logic and rational ability.

2.5.1.3 Perceptual block

The perceptual blocks relate to the issues of teacher attitude and the level of expertise teachers have in planning and decision-making. The issues are professional jealousy, lack of confidence, fear of victimisation or voicing opinions. According to Cunningham (ibid) such issues relate to perceptually selecting what fits our mind set such as: narrow thinking, closed-mindedness, saturation and failure to utilize all sensory inputs.

In order to be able to deal with problems leading to difficulties experienced in the decision-making process, it is imperative that one becomes aware of such blockages and knows how to influence decision-making. "Self-respect, respect for others, optimism, trust and willingness to invest energy and take risks" as Cunningham (ibid) argues, go a long way in reducing barriers to effective decision-making.

2.6 Conclusion

If South Africa is to succeed in attempts to completely transform the education system, an urgent need to investigate the educators involvement in decision-making in schools is imperative.

The White Paper on Education and Training of 1996 and the South African Schools Act No.84 of 1996 in particular, show a shift in thinking in favour of broad participation in the process of decision-making. Given this shift in thinking, it is important to identify attitudes of educators towards possible ways in which educator participation in decision-making can be effected in practice. From the literature reviewed, educator involvement in decision making can exist in decentralised systems through school based management.

The literature survey contained in this chapter, further points to very important tenets Of participative decision-making, namely:

- sharing decision-making
- educator empowerment and principal leadership
- inclusive school decision-making structures
- situational consideration in participative decision-making and
- educator development

It remains to be said that in a new dispensation, “governing bodies and principals in South Africa need the participation of their first-line managers - their teachers - in order to perform their own functions effectively” (Conley et al., 1988: 275). It is the writer’s opinion that if South African educators are to be involved in school’s decision making process, the following questions need to be considered:

- a) Do the educators accept the responsibility of being major role player in decision-making?
- b) Do the educators have the skills and expertise of engaging meaningfully in these forms of development?
- c) Do the schools have the management organisational structures to encourage such initiatives?
- d) Do the educators value participatory and collaborative forms of decision-making?
- e) Does the education system have enough support structures such as educators’ resource centres to promote accountable participation in decision-making?

Answers to the above questions could ensure the formulation or development of a decision-making model which could facilitate adequate and acceptable involvement of educators in schools’ decision-making process. The next chapter discusses methods in this study.

Chapter Three

Research methodology and procedure

3.1 Introduction

The aims of this study as described in chapter 1 were to determine the types of decisions in which the educators in senior secondary schools are involved; to establish whether the educators are involved in change related decisions; and to investigate if decisions in which the educators could be involved may foster participative leadership.

The aims of the study and the research questions were re-emphasized in this chapter in order to give a coherent description of the methodology and procedures used in the investigation.

This chapter provided an account of how the study was designed and conducted. In describing the research design, description was given to the method of investigation, the research instruments or tools used and the reasons for choosing them. The size of the sample, the sampling procedure, method of data collection and data analysis were also discussed.

3.2 Research Questions

The key questions of the study were:

- 1. In which areas of the decision-making processes do the educators participate?*
- 2. To what extent are the educators involved in the school decision-making processes?*
- 3. What are the key considerations in the formation of decision-making teams?*
- 4. How can educator involvement in decision-making be enhanced?*

5. How can the school support the educators in the acquisition of skills and the development of knowledge based on managerial decision-making?
6. What are the issues related to the involvement or lack of involvement of educators in the decision-making processes?

3.3 The research design

3.3.1 The nature of the methodology

Consistent with the aim of this study, it was decided that a survey would be used. The surveys, as Cohen and Manion (1995:83) point out, are used for gathering data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions, or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared or determining the relationships that exist between specific events. This viewpoint is underscored by Lovell and Lawson (1970) by stating that descriptive survey research focuses on prevailing conditions, practices, beliefs, attitudes, processes and emerging trends. Such methods enable the researcher to secure evidence concerning an existing situation regarding the nature of decision-making processes in schools.

It was the researcher's view that only after we have determined where we are, can we then decide where we want to go. Survey research was considered appropriate to establish the educators' perceptions pertaining to their involvement in decision-making in schools. Johnson (1994: 14) points out that the respondents have to be prompted to respond to specific questions to make relevant statements of facts or opinions.

3.3.2 The research tool

Since the objective of this research study was to investigate the educator's involvement in decision-making in schools, it was decided that surveying the Educator's opinions on the issue would be the best method of obtaining the necessary, relevant information. Accordingly, it was determined that self-completion questionnaire would be the most suitable instrument or tool for this purpose. Cohen and Manion (1994:83) state that whether the survey is large scale or small scale, it involves one or more data collection techniques, one of these is the self-completion of postal questionnaires.

A choice of questionnaires was based on the consideration of time and the cost involved in undertakings such as interviews. Judd, Smith and Kidder (1991:215 - 218) and Sellitz et.al. (1976: 294 - 297) point out that each form of data collection technique has advantages and disadvantages. The researcher needs to consider these factors in relation to the suitability of each technique to each research question, the specific population targeted for research, as well as relative costs. Judd, Smith and Elliot (1991); Fink and Kosecoff (1985) and Simon (1986) state that a postal questionnaire is less costly, puts less pressure on an immediate response and gives respondents a greater feeling of anonymity.

The disadvantages of using postal questionnaires include an inability of the respondents to ask for explanations of the key questions which they might not understand. The researcher has difficulty in probing responses and seeking explanations. The researcher is unable to control the context of question-answering and motivate the respondents.

Looking at the time-factor and despite the disadvantages above, a self-administered questionnaire was considered more appropriate on the basis that it is less costly than interviews. The researcher personally delivered the questionnaires

to the school principals to ensure that all the questionnaires reached the respondents. He was able to motivate and assure them of confidentiality. The questionnaire contained both closed and open-ended questions. The latter questions would allow respondents to give original responses. The use of mostly closed questions, including those with specified 3 and 5 point scale were also preferred as they facilitate the coding process. The various items in the questionnaire focused on educator-involvement in decision-making with reference to the following issues:

- Educators' views on who should be involved in managerial decision-making in schools.
- Educators' present involvement in their schools.
- Educators' attitudes toward their school's decision-making procedures.
- What educators consider to have been the limitations to their greater involvement in decision-making, if they felt they are constrained.
- Educators' expectations for the future with regard to managerial decision-making.
- Educators' views on the means by which they might obtain the necessary skills to make decisions.

3.3.3 Phrasing of questions

The vocabulary used simple language in phrasing the questionnaire. Care was taken to ensure that questions and alternatives were not loaded.

3.4 The sample and sampling design

3.4.1 The unit of analysis and the sample

The unit of analysis in this study was on the post-level 1 educators. The focus being on the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of the secondary school post-level 1 educators towards educator participation in decision-making processes in schools.

Taking into account the need to limit costs associated with this study to an affordable level and thereby maintain a manageable size of the study, the target population of educators was set. Educators from six secondary schools were selected at random from the three of the seven circuits in the Umbumbulu district. The six schools chosen, are situated in the Upper-South Coast area of the Durban South region.

The population of educators sampled was heterogeneous comprising Blacks, Indians and Whites. The schools of different racial groups were chosen to make the findings or the results of the research truly representative of all educators, irrespective of race, colour or creed, in the population. A random stratified sample was drawn to be representative of the total population. The two strata were Post level 1 educators in non-promotion posts and the other was the post level 1 educators acting in promotion posts such as Principals or Deputy Principals or Head of Departments. In a stratified sample the population is divided into two or more strata based on a single criterion or more than one criteria (Judd, Smith and Elliot:1991). Within each strata the researcher applied systematic random sampling in the selection of educators.

When the questionnaire was administered, the researcher informed the respondents that the questionnaire needed to be filled by post-level 1 educators only. The educators were further grouped in terms of teaching experience on the assumption that the variable of experience might influence their perceptions.

The researcher took into account the fact that stratification is “a very powerful tool in obtaining a representative sample” (Fowler 1984:35), and that a large sample would not necessarily yield profoundly different findings in survey research. Initially it was decided that a sample size of 49,5% of the total population would be used. The actual total number of PLI educators in the population was 301. Forty nine and a half percent of this total population amounted to a total sample size of 149 educators which is a manageable number to work with.

Due to some limitations of the study as shown below, the sample size was reduced to 78 which is 25,9% of the population.

3.4.2 Procedure used in administering questionnaire

A letter was written to the Chief Superintendent of Education Management of Umbumbulu District requesting the administration of a questionnaire to the educators in the three circuits of the named district. It was clearly stated to which schools the questionnaires were going to be administered (see Appendix B). A second letter was written to each of the six school principals requesting their assistance and co-operation in the administration of questionnaires to their respective post-level 1 educators (see appendix C).

Following the letters, the researcher telephoned principals in order to make appointments. The questionnaires were then handed personally to the principals and they were requested to assist by giving them to their respective educators.

The principals were most co-operative and supportive. Each questionnaire assured the respondents anonymity and confidentiality (see appendix A). Issues such as the aim and purpose of the study, the confidentiality of the sources of data and the assurance of anonymity of subjects, were discussed with the respective principals prior to the administration of the questionnaires.

3.5 Limitation of the study

The most remarkable limitation of the study was the engagement of schools in trial and final examinations. Educators of some schools were writing examinations and were therefore on leave. There was therefore a delay with regard to the analysis and interpretation of data as some questionnaires were not returned. Some questionnaires were incomplete.

The overall response rate was 25,9%, a total number of 78 educators out of a sample of 149. Possible reasons for this response rate will be further discussed in chapter 4 on data analysis and interpretation. It was acceptable because the sample size was above 12%.

Principals were then telephoned and thanked for their courtesy and co-operation in distributing the questionnaire.

3.6 Data analysis

Data was categorised into frequencies and percentages. Responses to open-ended questions were thematically grouped.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research questions were outlined and the rationale for the choice of the research design was explained. In explaining the research design,

emphasis was made on the nature of the research methodology, the questionnaires as the mode research tool, the sample and sampling design and the procedure used in administering questionnaires. Motivation was given for the choice of the data collection method. The chapter was concluded by reference to brief considerations of ethical issues such as the confidentiality of data and the assurance of anonymity of subjects and a brief discussion of the limitations of the study.

Chapter Four

Data analysis and findings

4.1 Introduction

This section provides the analysis of the responses of the six secondary school post-level 1 educators in the Upper South Coast area of Umbumbulu district. The responses make 25,9% of the total population of educators drawn upon for the study. This represents a low return rate despite attempts by the researcher to motivate principals through telephone calls and the letters. The low response rate as outlined in chapter three could be attributed to, inter alia, the circumstances of educators at the time the questionnaire was administered. The questionnaire was administered in October at a time when most post-level 1 educators, who are studying part-time, were engaged in their examinations and others were busy conducting the final examinations for the learners. All secondary school principals were the chief invigilators of the Matriculation examinations. As a result, they were not able to fully assist the researcher in motivating educators to answer the questionnaire. Hence completed questionnaires were few and some were not even returned.

The above factor presented limitations for this study. As a result only tentative generalizations can be made from the educators' responses for analysis and interpretation.

4.2 The respondents

Data analysis in this research study will be in the form of frequency tables. Where necessary, the research will give brief summaries and then interpret the data. Responses to open-ended questions are presented thematically.

Table 1: Biographical details of the respondents

1. GENDER	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
MALE	39	50
FEMALE	39	50
TOTAL	78	100
2. TEACHING EXPERIENCE		
1-5 YEARS	17	21.8
6-10 YEARS	30	38.5
11-15 YEARS	18	23.1
16-20 YEARS	10	12.8
20+ YEARS	03	3.8
TOTAL	78	100.0

Table 2: Academic/Professional Qualification

QUALIFICATIONS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
TEACHING DIPLOMA(S)	42	53.8
DEGREE + T DIPLOMA(S)	29	37.2
DEGREE(S)	06	07.7
NONE	01	1.3
TOTAL	78	100.0

In terms of biographical data, responses represented both female and male elements of the population. Samples had a wide range of experience and qualification.

The views solicited covers these variables.

Table 1 shows that the sample comprises equal numbers of males and females.39 males (50%) and 39 females (50%). Out of the total population of 78 educators, most of them have six to ten years teaching experience (38.5%). The second group has eleven to fifteen years experience (23.1%). The third group has one to five years of teaching experience (21.8%). Very few educators are in the range of sixteen to twenty years of teaching experience (12.8%). Table 1 further shows that only 3.8% of the population has a teaching experience of twenty years and above.

Table 2 shows that most of the educators in this study have a teaching diploma (53.8%). Some educators have an academic University qualification as well as a teaching diploma (37.2%). It is worth reiterating at this point that this study was conducted to post-level 1 educators only. Table 2 also shows a percentage of only 1.3 for those post-level 1 educators in the population without any academic or professional qualification.

Table 3: Educator’s response to item 5 of section C : Who would you regard as making the most of the decisions in your school?”

RESPONSE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Principal alone	16	20.5
Principal and Management Team	23	29.5
Management and Staff	36	46.2
Educators themselves	01	1.3
Management Staff and LRC	02	2.6
TOTAL	78	100.0

4.3. Educator perceptions of schools managerial decision-making process.

Table 3 shows that 46.2% of the population regard the management team in consultation with the staff, as making most of the decisions in their schools. The same table 3 shows that 29.5% regard the school decisions as being made by the principal and management team and 20.5% regard the principal alone as making most of the decisions for the school. A very low percentage of educators (1.3%) made by educators and management staff in conjunction with the Learner Representation council, respectively.

The findings in table 3 show the prevailing situation in schools with regard to the decision-making processes. From the findings in table 3, it is remarkable that participative decision-making is taking place, a trend towards decentralization of school management in a democratic South Africa. Although these findings show that in a large number of schools decision-making is centered around the principal and the management team, some schools reflect that there is an involvement of educators and the learners in such processes (1.3% and 2.6% respectively).

Table 4: educators' opinion as to who should be responsible fo managerial decision-making in schools (item 15 of section C)

RESPONSE	TOTAL	%
Principal	-	-
Principal + Management Team	12	15.4
Educators	-	-
Educators + Principal + Management Team (Entire Staff)	66	84.6
TOTAL	78	100.0

As different from what obtains in terms of who makes decisions, responses in this item indicate that the preference in schools is that decisions be made by educators, principals and management team.

Table 4 (item 15) reflects the educators opinions as to who they actually think should be responsible for managerial decision-making in schools. The findings in table 4 show that 84.6% of the respondents say that the principal, the management team and the entire staff together, should jointly be responsible for managerial decision making in schools. Very few (15.4%) of the respondents maintain that the managerial decision-making in schools is the responsibility of the principal and the management team only. Research reveals that some educators feel that their main responsibility is teaching and that they do not want to be burdened with myriad responsibilities of school management. Others want to avoid leadership and dislike power and do not favour participation in areas such as maintenance of buildings (Reep and Grier 1992:91; Midgley and Wood 1993:25; Steyn and Squelch 1997:7).

Table 4 further shows that neither the principal nor the educators are regarded as independently responsible for the managerial decision-making in schools.

Table 5.1: Item 7: “Educators should have a say in the decisions relating to the management of their schools.”

ITEM	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNSURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
7	53	25	-	-	-	78
	67.9%	32.1%	-	-	-	100.0%

There is a definite preference that educators should have a say in managerial decisions of their schools.

Table 5.1 (item7) show that 100% of post-level 1 educators agree with the statement that educators should have a say in the decisions relating to the management of their schools. This correlates with Steyn and Squelch (1997:7) who found that teachers wanted a say and do not merely adhere to autocratic decisions of the principal.

Table 5.2: Item12 “Involvement in managerial decision-making will contribute to professional development or empowerment of educators”

ITEM	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNSURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
12	52	24	01	01	-	78
	66.7%	30.8%	1.3%	1.3%	-	100%

According to these responses, educators believe that involvement in managerial decision-making will contribute to professional development or empowerment of educators.

This table (5.2) shows that 66.7% of the respondents say that the involvement of educators in managerial decision-making will contribute towards professional development of empowerment of educators.

This is in support of Bezzina (1993: 23) and Slater (1994: 49) who believe that teachers are willing to undertake additional roles if given the opportunity to work together to creating a professional culture. They wish to be involved in those issues where they have expertise and which directly affect their work.

Table 5.2 further shows that 30.8% agree (but not strongly) with the statement. Only 1.3% is unsure and disagrees, respectively. The 20.5% of the respondents regard the principal alone as making the most of the decisions in their schools. This shows an autocratic style of leadership still exists in some schools in the region. This society is now regarded as being democratic.

Through such findings, as Mosoge and van der Westhuizen (1997:201) argue, participation is an attitudinal matter. Politics, rhetoric and legislation can never ensure its success. Undoubtedly authoritarian modes and individualistic approaches to management are entrenched behaviour patterns in the Republic of South Africa.

Table 6

ITEM	YES	NOT SURE	NO
6. Do you wish to be involved in managerial decision-making processes in your school?	68	-	10
	87.2%	-	12.8%
9. Would you say that opportunities exist in your school for participation by educators in managerial decision making?	44	24	10
	56.4%	30.8%	12.8%
17. If you are presently not teaching the subject(s) for which you are suitably qualified, would you say that you were consulted before these subjects were allocated to you?	29	-	14
	37.2%	-	17.9%

ITEM	YES	NOT SURE	NO
18. Were you given the opportunity to teach the standards (Grades) of your choice this year?	56	-	22
	71.8%	-	28.2%
20. Do you think that our pre-service education programmes (i.e. the initial teacher training programmes) provide the educators with the necessary training to involve themselves in decision making?	30	26	22
	38.5%	33.3%	28.2%
21. Would you regard yourself as being competent enough to engage in managerial decision making?	63	08	07
	80.8%	10.3%	8.9%
22. Have you had any formal training in managerial decision making?	30	-	48
	38.5%	-	61.5%
23. Would you say that the in-service education programs of the Department focus attention on the need for educator involvement in decision-making?	20	46	12
	25.6%	58.9%	15.4%
24. Do you think that the Department's in-service education programmes are designed taking into account the needs of educators?	25	39	14
	32.1%	50.0%	17.9%
26. Would you say that staff empowerment programmes in your school stress the need for educators to become involved in decision making?	34	28	19
	43.6%	35.9%	20.5%
29. Overall, would you say that the Department is amenable to suggestions from educators regarding managerial matter?	17	39	22
	21.8%	50.0%	28.2%

Table 6 (item 6) shows that 87.2% of the respondents wish to be involved in managerial decision making processes in their schools. This correlates to about 81% of the same respondents who regard themselves as being competent to engage in managerial decisions (item 21 of section c). The 12.8 % who say that they do not wish to be involved in managerial decision-making process, point out in item 8 that their engagement in classes and the limited time factor, prevent them from partaking in decision-making.

Table 6 (item 9) shows that 56.4% say that opportunities for participation by educators exist in the schools. Twenty one percent of those who responded 'yes' to item 9 followed it up in item 10 and regarded the formal staff meetings (item 27) as the type of opportunity that exists for participation in managerial decision-making. Seventy one percent of the respondents show that educators were given an opportunity to teach the standards (grades) of their choice. This implies consultation although 28% show that there was no consultation .

Item 13 shows that 85% of the respondents regard the management - staff attitude towards educator participation in decision-making as being very positive. 10% says that the attitude is positive and only 4.0% regard it as being negative.

4.4. Educator's perceptions of the role of the department and in-service training

With regard to item 14, 76.3% regard the Department to be supportive towards greater educator participation in decision-making while 23.7% regard the Department as being neutral.

Item 20 shows that 38.5% of the respondents have an opinion that our pre-service education programmes provide the educators with the necessary training to involve themselves in decision-making; 33.3% are unsure and 28.2% responded no. The above findings in item 20 show how inconsistent or diverse the education in our pre-service programmes are.

This could be attributed to the existence of a number of different institutions of higher learning with different education programmes. Bailey (1992: 41) is of the opinion that teacher’s pre-service programmes do not prepare educators for their role as empowered professionals. However teachers acknowledge the importance of preservice and inservice teacher training.

The frequency table 7 (item 22) shows that 61.5% of the respondents involved in this study have had no formal training in managerial decision making. This contradicts to the 80.8% of the same respondent in item 21 who regard themselves as being sufficiently competent to engage in managerial decision-making. The principals and management teams non-involvement of educators in managerial decision-making as shown in item 5 of section c (20.5% and 29.5% respectively), could be attributed to their understanding that more than 80% of educators are not sufficiently competent to engage in managerial decision-making.

Most educators, according to item 23 and 24, seem to be unsure of whether the inservice education programmes of the Department exist or not. 58.9% is not sure whether the inservice programmes of the Department focus attention on the need for educator involvement in decision making 50% is not sure whether the above mentioned programmes are designed to take into account the needs of educators. Only 25% and 32.1% responded ‘yes’ to the above two items respectively. 12.0% and 17.9% said ‘no’ to item 23 and item 24 respectively.

Table 7 Item 8: Please briefly explain why you feel educators should be involved or should not be involved in managerial decisions of a school

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1. Involvement (“say”)	76	97.4
2. Non-involvement (“no say”)	2	2.6
TOTAL	78	100.0

Table 7 (item 8) shows that 97.4% of the respondents feel that educators should have a say in managerial decisions of a school. As Steyn and Squelch (199: 7) found in their research, that educators wanted a say and not merely accept the autocratic decisions of the principal. They often experience frustration when management did not listen to them.

Table 8 : Themes that emerged from the positive responses of item 8 (involvement), in order of frequency.

THEMES	FREQUENCY	%
1. Ownership	24	30.8
2. Direct Affection	20	25.6
3. Professional Development	7	9.0
4. Good Relations	7	9.0
5. High Performance	4	5.1
6. Democracy	3	3.8

4.5. Perceptions of: “Why participation?

The positive responses of item 8 led to the emergence of the themes as listed in table 8. These themes account for the respondents’ support of the educator involvement in managerial decision-making of a school.

The most prominent theme to emerge was 'ownership'. Thirty percent of the respondents said that if educators are allowed to participate in the decision-making process, they will develop a feeling of belonging to a collective enterprise and will have a stake in the future of the enterprise. Others said that such educators will co-operate with decisions and show responsibility towards the implementation of such decisions if they have been part of the decision-making process. Twenty five percent of the respondents felt that educators should have a say because they are the ones who will have to implement the decisions. Putting it differently, the other respondents said that "whatever decision that is taken in a school will always directly or indirectly affect the educators". For such responses, a theme, "Direct affection" was assigned and 25.6% of the responses took this theme as a reason.

The third theme is 'professional development'. Nine percent regarded the involvement of educators to decision-making as contributing to their professional development, empowerment and experience. To quote a respondent: "Educators are the active implementors of most operations that are carried out in the school. Teachers feel empowered if they are included in important decision-making". The same percentage, 9.0, regarded the involvement of educators as promoting good human relations in a school.

Five percent of the respondents regarded participation of educators as a means or a contributory factor to effectiveness or high performance emerged. Three percent of the respondents gave a reason for involvement of educators as to "promote transparency and democracy in a school". Other educators say, they regard decisions taken through consultation and consensus as often very effective and positive. The researcher's experience in the education department tells that the notion of the workplace democracy comes about when an educator feels that his basic right to participate in decisions which affect him, his teaching and his pupils, is respected.

Numerous studies (Sergiovanni:1967; Duke and Showers:1980; Berliner:1981; Conley et al:1988) support the above emerged themes, confirm that since teachers are the only school employees with ongoing contact with pupils, one of the greatest strengths of teacher participation in decision-making, is that it builds consensus on a school's goals and agreement on its priorities. This decreases the need for unnecessary supervision of teacher's work. Studies also show that by allowing teachers to participate in decision-making, the benefits to individual teachers and to schools as organizations are enormous.

Skilbeck (1984) emphasises that "decision-making is a staple of teachers' professional lives" and that the role of the teacher as a professional person cannot be fulfilled unless there is scope for direct participation in significant aspects of management. Sharon Conley and her American colleagues (1988) underscore this point in their reference to the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1982. They observed that as a result of teachers not being involved in the formulation of recommendations contained in a report, they (the teachers) felt that "their role as professional partners in the educational enterprise was slighted." Maharaj (1991:23) points out that educators are the only direct and sustained contact with their systems (pupils), and as such, enhancing teacher participation can only help improve the quality of decisions made at school level.

Duke and Showers (1980:93-106) state that there are inter alia, three important benefits resulting from the involvement in or shared decision-making.

These are:

- feelings of self efficacy
- ownership
- workplace democracy.

Table 9 : Item 30: “Kindly list all those factors which in your opinion prevent educators from taking an active part in decision-making processes in school.”

Responses to item 30 are grouped in themes .

The themes are grouped according to the frequency in which they were mentioned.

THEME	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1. Leadership Style	54	69,2%
2.Non-Empowerment of Educators	18	23,1%
3.Educator’s Attitude	13	16,7%
4.Poor Staff Relations	10	12,8%
5.Time Constraints	05	6,4%

4.6 Factors preventing active participation : Educator’s Perceptions

With regard to item 30, five themes emerged . The most prominent theme to emerge preventing educators from taking part in decision-making processes in schools,(69,2%) is ‘Leadership Style’. The following factors grouped under the theme, ‘Leadership Style’ were regarded as being deterrents of successful decision making processes: non-consultation, favouritism, incompetency or insecurity of the principal as well as autocratic or dictatorship.

Steyn and squelch (1997:4) in their study: 'Exploring the perceptions of teacher empowerment in South Africa', found that the the educators expressed their preference for a principal who was open, democratic and who encouraged participation as opposed to an autocratic principal. This view supports leadership style as impacting on the educator's active participation in decision-making processes in schools.

The second theme that emerged most often in item 30, was 'Non-empowerment of Educators'. Twenty three percent of the respondents regarded educators status of non empowerment as preventing them from participating actively in school's decision-making processes. Some respondents referred to the dis-empowered educators to being incompetent, having a low-moral or low self-esteem.

'Educators' Attitude' emerged as the third theme as preventing educators from actively participating in decision-making processes (16,7%). Some respondents used the concepts such as passiveness of educators, negativity and irresponsibility to describe the attitude of some educators.

Table 9 shows that 12,85 of the respondents regarded 'Poor staff relations' as another factor preventing educators from actively participating in decision -making process. Other respondents put it differently by referring to communication barriers contributing to poor staff relations.

The final theme (6,4%) pertains to time constraints. Some respondents regard the unavailability of time for educators as preventing them from partaking in decision-making processes. They say that educators are overloaded with classroom work and no time is available in the schools' decision-making processes.

Although many (76) say that the educators must have a say in the managerial decision-making of a school, they give different opinions or reasons to support their positive response. Some (24) feel that involvement creates ownership by the educators. 20 feel that the decisions taken directly affect them and they are the only ones who constantly interact with the pupils. They believe that they understand the school realities better than other stakeholders.

Seven educators in this study felt that extending their participation could facilitate professional development. The same number felt that good relationships could be created if participative decision-making could be practiced. Generally, educators in this study regarded the principals leadership style prevented educators from participating actively in decision-making processes in schools.

4.7 Summary of findings

From the analysis of educator responses to the perceptions of the Secondary school educators in participative decision-making, the following points emerged:

Most educators perceive the principal and the management team as making most of the schools decisions. Their opinion is that the school decision-making processes should incorporate the principal, the management team and the entire staff.

Of the 78 respondents, 52 regard educator participation to decision-making as contributing to professional development and empowerment. The educators seem to be aware of the opportunities that exist at school level, which enhance the participation in managerial decision-making. However, they seem to be unsure of the various in-service programmes that exist at the Departmental level. These programmes focus attention on the needs for educator involvement in decision-making. 46 educators are unsure of items 23 and 24.

With regard to Hypothesis I, this study reveals that there is a remarkable participative decision-making taking place in Secondary schools. Although the educators are involved in decision-making activities in Secondary schools, managerial decision-making activities are still dominated by the principal and the management team.

With regard to Hypothesis II, this study reveals that the lack of educator involvement in managerial decision-making processes in schools gives rise to low morale and job dissatisfaction. This study therefore accepts these two assumptions.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the analysis of the responses of the educators drawn upon for the study. The data has been analyzed in the form of frequency tables. Open ended responses have been presented thematically and brief summaries of the researcher's interpretation of data has been given.

The chapter has been concluded by giving a brief summary of the findings from which the reasons or grounds for accepting the Hypothesis has been clearly stated.

Chapter Five

Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The research was conducted at a time during which many changes in education were being implemented. The Rationalization and redeployment was under operation, the governing bodies were, in all schools, then in operation. Educators were, from the perspective of policy, involved or affected, in one way or the other, by transformation in education. In many if not all the changes which were going on, they, in terms of policy, needed to participate.

This chapter draws conclusions and make recommendations against this background. With these conclusions, the researcher will attempt to answer the questions for this study as outlined in chapter one and reiterated in the introduction of the third chapter.

Given the background of the context in the South African Education system in existence thus far, one can fully appreciate the desire among educators to have a greater say in a variety of decisions in schools as well as other activities and experiences that constitute the broader management of a school. Against this background, the following conclusions are made:

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 There is a lack of communication between the Department and educators in curriculum restructuring.

In support of this conclusion, the SADTU's vice president of Education, Glen Abrahams , at SADTU's National Curriculum Conference held in Johannesburg (15-17 October 1999), said: " The main problems of [implementing the new curriculum were, inter-alia:

- lack of effective and appropriate training of educators
- little understanding by many educators
- inappropriate training and
- lack of support and ongoing training of educators in these new initiatives

(The Educator's voice 1999:1)

This study has further provided evidence to suggest that there is an existing barrier between the educators and Department of Education. This study notes that 58,9% of the educators are "not sure" whether the Department in-service education programmes focus attention on the need for educators involvement in decision-making. 50% of the respondents are "not sure" of how the Department in-service educators programmes are designed and "not sure" whether the Department is amenable to suggestions from educators regarding managerial matters (item 29). This indicates a lack of effective communication between the Department and educators which must be seen as the existence of a major constraining factor and barrier.

5.2.2 Educators are not adequately involved in decision-making in schools.

Ninety seven percent of the respondents in this study expressed the view that the educators should have a say (involved) in managerial decision-making. Actual opportunities for such participation do not exist at some schools. It is concluded, on the basis of data that principals, verbally recommend participatory, collegial or consultative style of leadership, yet in practice, they exercise authoritarian and bureaucratic styles of leadership.

5.2.3 There is no formal training of educators for participating in decision-making.

It is remarkable from the analysis and interpretation of data that, although there is willingness on the part of educators to become involved in decision-making in schools, it appears that no opportunity is made for them to undergo formal training in managerial decision-making. The majority of the respondents in this study, in fact indicated that although they felt competent enough to engage in managerial decision-making, they lacked a sound and formal training.

5.2.4 Some educators are keen in participating in decision-making.

The educators surveyed in this study accept the responsibility of becoming role-players in managerial decision-making. They show support for the argument that their participation in management should not be limited to the classroom. They (educators) think that their greater contact with pupils justifies the fact that their roles should be extended beyond teaching duties. Educators also think that their extended participation is important for their professional development and also for increasing their motivational level as it boosts their morale and enhances their self-esteem.

This development could be regarded as a fertile ground on which to build the collaborative forms of decision-making proposed in policy documents such as the White Paper on Education and Training of 1995 and the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996.

5.3 Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions drawn from the educators' responses above, the following recommendations are made:

5.3.1 The Department of Education must involve educators in planning in-service programmes for teachers.

The Department of Education should review the basis on which in-service education programmes are designed and organized for educators. The educators should have an input in the planning, development as well as the presentation of their own learning programs. This would be part of an ongoing process for developing educators.

5.3.2 Department of Education must ensure that Colleges of Education Curriculum equip educators for decision-making.

The Department should further work closely with its educator-training institutions to ensure that the pre-service education programs adequately prepare or equip the educators for the fulfillment of their professional responsibilities, particularly the decision-making processes.

Pre-service teacher education needs to be restructured to include training in managerial decision-making. Educators surveyed for the study have strongly suggested that teacher training institutions offer courses in management where the students would be exposed to the broad theory and practice of managerial processes as well as current debates on the subject.

5.3.3 There should be short-term courses on managerial decision-making offered by Universities in conjunction with the Department of Education.

In order to boost the educator's morale, the Department, in cooperation with universities, should assist the development of competence and skills in school's managerial decision-making processes by instituting accredited courses, workshops and seminars for the preparation of educators as first-line managers.

This recommendation is made with support of the majority respondents of this study who indicated that they had no formal training in managerial decision-making. The training referred to should take place in a holistic approach to educator development following the argument advanced by Fullan (1991) that the professional development of teachers must go hand in hand with the whole school development.

5.3.4 Stakeholder institutions must collaborate to contribute to effective school management

Universities, non-governmental organizations, colleges of education and schools must form partnerships and devise ways to inform the educators of the developments in transformation debates and trends for schools. Such partnerships would assist in the promotion of educator development.

5.3.5 Regions of education should devise strategies to support educators participate in informed ways in decision-making.

Participative management is new for many principals. This being so, capacity building in participative decision-making for educators is imperative.

5.3.6 Principals need to be trained on facilitating and managing accountable transformation

Whilst this is a positive sign, there ought to be some concern on the part of those who are in management in schools. If they are not alive to the changing scenario and do not

actively encourage the educators' desire for a broader concept of educator professionalism and participation, then they are likely to become alienated from those who represent the progressive mood which supports educational transformation in this country. In support of this argument, Corwin (1973:165) says that "...the professionally orientated person... sometimes must be disobedient towards his superiors precisely in order to improve his proficiency and to maintain standards of client welfare; especially if there are practices that jeopardize the best interest of students".

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has drawn conclusions and made recommendations on the study. The whole project has examined the role of educators in participative decision-making. It raised many issues regarding the type of decisions in which educators may or are keen to participate.

This was conducted in a period of unprecentred change in the education system, in a country which is at the infancy-stage of democracy. There is thus a need for ongoing research to inform the process of accountable participation of educators in school management.

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CONFIDENTIAL

SECTION A

I AM DOING A MASTER OF EDUCATION PROJECT IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING. I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR HELP AND CO-OPERATION IN COMPLETING THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE. YOUR VIEWS WILL BE TREATED CONFIDENTIALLY. PLEASE ANSWER OPENLY AND HONESTLY.

SECTION B

QUESTIONNAIRE

EDUCATOR INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

PLEASE MAKE A CROSS (X) TO INDICATE YOUR RESPONSES IN THE SPACES PROVIDED:

Kindly indicate your:

1. PRESENT RANK

- 1.1 Post level Educator **1**
- 1.2 Head of Department
- 1.3 Deputy Principal Senior Deputy/Principal

2. GENDER

- 2.1 Male
- 2.2 Female

3. TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 3.1 1-5 years
- 3.2 6-10 years
- 3.3 11-15 years
- 3.4 16-20 years
- 3.5 20+ years

4. ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- 4.1 Teaching Diploma (S)
- 4.2 Degree (S) plus Teaching Diploma (S)
- 4.3 Degree (S)
- 4.4 None of the above

SECTION C

VIEWS ON PARTICIPATIVE DECISION-MAKING.

PLEASE PLACE A CROSS (x) AND/OR ENTER YOUR RESPONSES IN THE APPROPRIATE SPACES

5. Who would you regard as making the most of the decisions in your school.

5.1 The Principal alone

5.2 The Principal and his management team

5.3 The management staff in consultation with the staff

5.4 The educators themselves (excluding management staff)

5.5 The management staff in consultation with the Learners Representative Council

6. Do you wish to be involved in managerial decision-making processes in your school?

6.1 Yes

6.2 No

7. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement:
"Educators should have a say in the decisions relating to the management of their school."

7.1 Strongly agree

7.2 Agree

7.3 Unsure

7.4 Disagree

7.5 Strongly disagree

8. Please briefly explain why you feel educators should or should not have a say in the managerial decisions of a school

9. Would you say that opportunities exist in your school for participation by educators in managerial decision making?

9.1 Yes

9.2 Not sure

9.3 No

10. If your response to 9 above is "yes", please describe briefly the type of opportunities that exist for managerial decision making in your school

- 11 Does the management staff of your school consult the rest of the staff before decisions regarding school management are made?

11.1 Often

11.2 Seldom

11.3 Never

- 12 Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement.

"Involvement in managerial decision making will contribute to the professional development or empowerment of educators"

12.1 Strongly agree

12.2 Agree

12.3 Unsure

12.4 Disagree

12.5 Strongly disagree

- 13 How would you describe the management staff's attitude towards educator participation in decision making in your school?

13.1 Very positive

13.2 Positive

13.3 Not very positive

- 14 In your opinion, which of the following best describes the Department's attitude towards greater educator participation in decision making?

14.1 Supportive

14.2 Neutral

14.3 Not Supportive

- 15 Who in your opinion should be responsible for managerial decision making in a school?

15.1 It should be left to the Principal

15.2 It should be left to the Principal and his/her management team

15.3 It should be left to the educators

15.4 It should be a joint effort involving the entire staff, including the Principal other management staff members and all the educators

16. Kindly indicate:

16.1 The subjects you are suitably qualified to teach

- (1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____

16.2 The subjects you are actually teaching this year

- (1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____

17. If you are presently not teaching the subject (s) for which you are suitably qualified, would you say that you were consulted before these subjects were allocated to you?

17.1 Yes

17.2 No

18. Were you given the opportunity to teach the standards (Grades) of your choice this year?

18.1 Yes

18.2 No

19. If you were NOT given the opportunity to select the subject (s) or Grades (s) you are teaching at present, who would you say took these decisions?

19.1 The Principal

19.2 The Principal and his/her management team

19.3 The Head of Department

19.4 The time table committee

19.5 Member(s) of the Directorate

19.6 Not applicable

20. Do you think that our pre-service education programmes (i.e. the initial teacher training programmes) provide the educators with the necessary training to involve themselves in decision making?

20.1 Yes

20.2 Not sure

20.3 No

21. Would you regard yourself as being competent enough to engage in managerial decision making

21.1 Yes

21.2 Not sure

21.3 No

22. Have you had any formal training in managerial decision making?

22.1 Yes

22.2 No

23. Would you say that the in-service education programmes of the Department focus attention on the need for educator involvement in decision-making?

23.1 Yes

23.2 Not sure

23.3 No

24. Do you think that the Department's in-service education programmes are designed taking into account the needs of educators?

24.1 Yes

24.2 Not sure

24.3 No

25. If your response to item 24 above is "No", on what basis would you say in-service education programmes are designed?

26. Would you say that staff empowerment development programmes in your school stress the need for educators to become involved in decision making?

26.1 Yes

26.2 Not sure

26.3 No

27. Do educators in your school meet on a formal basis to discuss how management issues of the school as a whole can be improved upon?

27.1 Often

27.2 Occasional

27.3 Never

28. Do the educators in your school meet on an informal basis to discuss how management issues of the school as a whole can be improved upon?

28.1 Often

28.2 Occasional

28.3 Never

29. Overall, would you say that the Department is amenable to suggestions from educators regarding managerial matters?

29.1 Yes

29.2 Not sure

29.3 No

30. Kindly list all those factors which in your opinion prevent educators from taking an active part in decision-making processes in school.

31. Are there any comments you would like to add on the participation of educators in decision-making in school?

Thank you for your time and co-operation.

M.J. NGIDI

APPENDIX B

1670 Kwa – Makhutha T/Ship
P.O. Amanzimtoti
4126
04 October 1999

The Chief Superintendent Of Education Management
U Mbumbulu District
P.O. U Mbumbulu
4105

Dear Sir / Madam

Application to do a survey on “Educator involvement in decision – making in schools”

I do appreciate that this is a very demanding period for educators. However may I be granted a permission to administer a questionnaire to the post level 1 educators of the following schools in your district .

Bhekaphambili, Sidelile High, Kingsway High, Siyabonga High, Masakhaneni High and Kwa – Makhutha Comprehensive High.

I have written letters to the principals of the above respective schools.

Yours Sincerely

M.J. Ngidi

APPENDIX C

1670 Kwa Makhutha T/Ship
P.O. Amanzimtoti
4126
04 October 1999

The Principal

Dear Sir/Madam

Questionnaire on Educator Involvement in Decision – Making.

I do appreciate that this is a very demanding period for educators. However may I apply to administer questionnaires to your post – level 1 educators in partial fulfillment of my research study towards the M.Ed. degree I am studying at the University of Zululand.

May I visit your school on Wednesday (06/10/99) to discuss the day and time convenient for me to administer the questionnaire. A letter from the Chief Superintendent of Education Management (Umbumbulu District) granting permission to undertake the research study will be forwarded as soon as it becomes available – but prior to visiting your school.

All information secured from the questionnaire will be regarded as confidential and no personal details will be mentioned in the findings.

Yours Sincerely

M.J. Ngidi

DURBAN SOUTH REGION

PROVINCE OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

ISIFUNDAZWE
SAKWAZULU-NATAL

PROVINSIE VAN
KWAZULU-NATAL

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ENQUIRIES:
IMBUZO: MRS W.N. SWARTZ
NAVRAE:

REFERENCE:
INKOMBA: CS 61087696
VERWYSING:

DATE:
USUKU: 21 October 1999
DATUM:

Mr. M.J. Ngidi
1670 KwaMakhutha T/Ship
P.O. Amanzimtoti
4126

Dear Mr. Ngidi

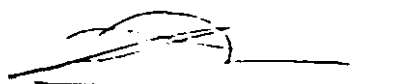
PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A RESEARCH STUDY

After careful consideration by the Committee for Research Proposals, we have pleasure in granting you permission to undertake your study, titled "Educator Involvement in decision - making in schools".

You have requested that the schools you wish to use as part of your study are : Sidelile High School, Kingsway High School, Bhekaphambili High School, Siyabonga High School, Masakhaneni High School and kwa Makhutha High School. Please make relevant arrangements with the respective Principals.

Yours Sincerely

for Chief Superintendent of Education Management (Umbumbulu District)


Superintendent General